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# eliminating racism empowering women ywca



YWCA Syracuse & Onondaga County

Winter 2010



Cheryl Bordies of Solvay has changed her life for the better with the help of the YWCA.



The customer service counter at Price Chopper is a very busy place. Cheryl says she loves her job.



Sherronda Miller (left) and Tonia Miller work with Cheryl Bordies behind the customer service counter.

## Service with a Smile

### *Solvay Woman Thanks the YWCA for Helping Her Change Her Life*

Cheryl Bordies of Solvay has plenty to smile about these days. For the past two years, Bordies has worked as a customer service manager for Price Chopper in Syracuse. “My life is so different now than I thought it was going to be,” she said.

Bordies credits the YWCA with giving her the second chance she needed to rebuild her life. “Thank God, for the people of the YWCA. It’s a place that if you really want to change, they give you the support and structure you need to get on your feet,” Bordies said.

Bordies says the YWCA gave her a roof over her head at their Women’s Residence Program. She says because of the caring people who run the YWCA programs, she regained her confidence and was empowered to turn her life around. “They opened the door and gave me that second chance and I ran with it,” she laughed.

The YWCA also put Bordies to work. First, she worked in the YWCA’s newsstand on the first floor of the University Building on Washington Street in Syracuse. After working her way up through the ranks to supervisor, Bordies worked as an administrative assistant in the YWCA’s offices. “They gave me the incentive to keep improving myself,” she said.

Bordies says when the YWCA felt she was ready, they encouraged her to find a place to live and a job. “Change is hard. Change is scary, but they were with me every step of the way.”

Now Bordies can’t help but smile. “I’m happy. I wouldn’t be where I am today without the programs of the YWCA.”

# YWCA's Spirit of American Women Event a Success

Internationally-renown author, Donna Woolfolk Cross of Syracuse, spoke about her popular and controversial novel, *Pope Joan*, as part of the YWCA's annual *Spirit of American Women* fundraising luncheon at the LaFayette Hills Country Club in Syracuse.

Cross, who conducted extensive research before writing her novel, said it is well-documented that women

were only known in history if they were connected to a powerful man. She says in the 9th Century, women were forbidden to be educated and by law women could be beaten by their husbands and fathers, the only rules regulated the size of the club.

A hearty laugh came from the capacity crowd when Cross said in those days it was believed that there was a relationship between a woman's brain and her uterus. The higher her intelligence, the less able she was considered to bear children.

After reading a short passage from her novel, Cross made the point that it is very sad that there are still places in the world today which prohibit women from getting an education.

Cross thanked the YWCA for



Author, Donna Woolfolk Cross of Syracuse, spoke about her popular novel, *Pope Joan*, as part of the YWCA's annual *Spirit of American Women* luncheon.

all they do in helping women achieve and work past hardships. "No matter how great the obstacles, there will always be opportunities, and that's what the YWCA gives--opportunities.

Before the keynote speaker took the podium, two women who credit the YWCA and its programs with changing their lives shared their stories with the audience.

Shaquoiya Allison of Syracuse says if it weren't for the opportunity to participate in Girls Inc. at the YWCA after-school programs when she was growing up, she wouldn't know where she would be today. "Girls Inc. programs provided opportunities that my family couldn't do for me at the time," she said. Allison especially enjoyed all the field trips and the ice skating outings.

"Now it is my turn to give back," said Allison. Allison is working toward a degree, possibly in childcare/social work. She is currently working in the after school program at Girls Inc.

"The girls in the program now tell me they want to grow up to be just like me, so I must be doing something



YWCA Board President Lisa Stuart with Shannon Baxter, Shaquoiya Allison and YWCA Executive Director Joan Durant.

right," Allison said.

Shannon Baxter of Syracuse told the audience she is a mother, a nurse, and a caring and honest friend, but there was a time when she was also a liar, a thief, an addict and an inmate.

"My addiction to drugs turned me into a person I never wanted to be," said Baxter. "I was in love with feeling numb."

Baxter says she remembers even taking her young daughter with her on a drug run. When she hit rock bottom, she says Treatment Court mandated her to live in the YWCA's Women's Residence program.

"The YWCA assisted me instead of kicking me out," Baxter said. Today, Baxter is celebrating more than 560 days of being clean and sober. "The YWCA gave me a second chance at life. What they did for me saved my life. Today I have a future, hope and serenity."



"Many thanks to the following sponsors of Spirit of American Women. These companies and over 125 donors contributed more than \$13,000 that will go directly to girls programming, childcare, affordable housing, economic empowerment, and self-sufficiency."

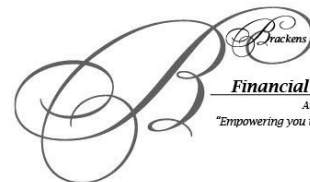


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10-year-old Makailah of Syracuse learned about Broadcast Journalism from news reporter Katie Gibas of YNN cable news.



10-year-old Nazjay Hosea of Syracuse explores the science of blood with Pathologist Anita Zannin.



Christina Kuney and Noa Ford get advice from S.E.E.D.'s Melissa Young as they create their own custom apple juice.

# Girls Get Hands-On Ideas about Career Choices

*Girls Inc. at the YWCA's Expanding Your Horizons Opens Girls' Eyes to Careers in Science and Math*

"Today was awesome," said 10-year-old Nazjay Hosea of Syracuse. The 5th grader at Franklin Elementary School in Syracuse attended Girls Inc. at the YWCA's hands-on, interactive career conference for girls in grades 5 - 10 called *Expanding Your Horizons*, held recently in Syracuse. "I met a news reporter (Katie Gibas of YNN News) and learned all about her job, so now I think I may want to be in Journalism."

"*Expanding Your Horizons* is an event designed to energize girls to explore a wide-range of career options with a special emphasis on the importance of math, science, and technology education," explained Jacklyn O'Hara, program director.

The day was filled with presentations from studying the trails termites make with Dr. Melissa Fierke of SUNY ESF to learning about Self Discovery, Empowerment, Entrepreneurship & Development, (S.E.E.D.) by creating

products, naming them and creating a marketing campaign with Abigail Henson, Melissa Young and Mandy Westerdahl from the Environmental Finance Center at Syracuse Center of Excellence. The products the girls made and named were apple sauce, apple juice and an apple parfait.

The girls got a lesson in "Bloodstain Pattern Analysis" from Anita Zannin, the director of Forensic Associates, LLC in Syracuse. "I never knew there was so much to know about blood," said 10-year-old Asaiah Ford, a 5th grader at Salem Hyde Elementary School in Syracuse. "This whole day got me thinking about what I want to be when I grow up and I'm thinking being a teacher would be fun."

9-year-old Natalie Phelps, a 4th grader at Webster Elementary School in Syracuse says she never realized there were jobs out there that she could see herself doing. "I thought the blood stuff was interesting. I want to be a blood investigator."

Zannin smiled when she learned she had inspired Phelps to follow in her footsteps. "This program was a great way for girls to get exposure to different career fields. I wish we had something like this when I was going to school," said Zannin.

"I think it gives them a realistic view of what a career would be like instead of waiting and finding out in college that what they're studying to become is not something they want to do."



9-year-old Natalie Phelps of Syracuse says she never realized there were jobs out there that she could see herself doing.



A sample of the apple juice, apple sauce and apple parfait products the girls created and named.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**2011 GIRLS SUMMIT**  
at Syracuse  
Center of  
Excellence

**Saturday,  
March 19, 2011**

**GoodSearch**

Don't forget to do all your Internet searches and online shopping through [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and designate YWCA Syracuse & Onondaga County. Earning money for the YWCA is only a mouse click away!



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## eliminating racism empowering women **ywca** programs

### Out of School Time Program

*Out of School Time Programs provide a safe and fun environment for children. Seven "structured choice" programs offer a variety of daily options. Programs are located at elementary schools in Syracuse (Bellevue, Franklin, H.W. Smith, Roberts, Salem Hyde); East Syracuse (Fremont); and Baldwinsville (Harry Elden).*

### Women's Residence

*The Women's Residence Program is designed to assist single or parenting women overcome their life obstacles. It provides safe, affordable housing with 24-hour staffing.*

### My Sister's Closet

*Located at 300 Burt Street in Syracuse, My Sister's Closet helps women in the Residence Program to develop appropriate professional wardrobes as they work toward finding and obtaining employment.*



Check out our  
fresh, new website  
[www.ywca-syracuse.org](http://www.ywca-syracuse.org)

### Girls Incorporated:

*Inspiring all Girls to be Strong, Smart and Bold  
Girls Incorporated provides research-based, informal education programs that encourage girls to take risks and master physical, intellectual and emotional challenges. Major programs address math and science education, pregnancy prevention, media literacy, adolescent health, substance abuse prevention and sports participation.*

- Out of School Time Program
- Teen Program for girls
- Camp Discovery
- Expanding Your Horizons and Girls Summit
- Family strengthening workshops

### Women to Work

*In 1998, women in the Residence Program organized, trained and opened their own small business. The News Stand at 120 East Washington Street in Syracuse serves as a vehicle to help women in the Residence Program develop the knowledge and skills they need to become confident, competent, productive members of today's working society.*

### Annual Day of Commitment to Eliminate Racism and Promote Diversity Luncheon is April 28, 2011

*The YWCA Day of Commitment Luncheon brings together people working to eliminate racism and promote diversity in Central New York. The gathering serves as a yearly barometer of progress toward their goal. Participants are encouraged to share their experiences, efforts and accomplishments in the battle of breaking down prejudices.*